Trade Union and Labor Rights Cheeky Links Sheet

Divisions with unskilled and skilled labour between Wobblies and Knights of Labour around 1900 -

Similar to 1930s AFL excludes unskilled labour which leads to the formation of CIO in 1935. Hampers progress to improve working conditions.

Closed Shops of craft unions in 1860s don’t allow unskilled workers to join. AAs usually occupy unskilled positions, forced to set up own unions eg. National Negro Labour Union 1869.

Link to AFL 1886 onwards - AAs can join but must set up own branches within the union. = weak solidarity

Link also to Philip Randolph

Violent tactics by trade unions fails to gain concessions from employers and government. Wobblies, violent tactics, broken up by 1924 + Homestead Strike - by 1900 not a single steel plant is unionised. Discredits unions.

Link to PATCO strike - illegal nature + unpopular with people, nationwide decrease in support for unions

Laissez Faire Policy during 19th century to help with the growth of industrialisation.

Link to 1980s Reagan privatising of industry + favouring employers > workers to revitalise economy.

Federal Government direct intervention to end strikes. Pullman Strike 1894 by Cleveland + 1981 PATCO by Reagan.

Surge of Nativism linked with accusations of subversion post WW1, fear of Bolshevism.

Link to Post WW2 Red Scare leads to Taft-Hartley Act 1947.

Racial divides of the unions. "New" immigration around 1900 , from South and East Europe rejected from joining unions, as leaders feared they would become open to accusations of subversion.

Link to 1970s/80s SE Asian immigrants don’t want to join unions, willing to work cheaply.

Welfare Capitalism by employers of 1910s/20s  to reduce industrial unrest + yellow dog contracts.

Link to 1950s increasing amount of white collar jobs whose occupants in government positions were obliged to sign no strike agreements and were banned from joining unions. Other industries used fringe benefits to similar effect.

Federal Government action ending discrimination in workplace through Truman executive order; FEPC 1941.

Link to Civil Rights Act 1964, ends discrimination in workplace.

Johnson's great society and welfare capitalism- idea that the workers could be pacified with measures concerning their working conditions in 1920s and increased spending on social security benefits opposed to giving the unions more power.  
  
Divisions in labour force threatening union influence- in the 1950s with economic expansion and the increase in white-collar workers sense of snobbery about blue collar workers and as a result union membership struggled as people moving to white collar work didn’t organize unions. Same situation in late nineteenth century with arrival of old immigrants and again new immigrants from Russia and Asia in early twentieth century.

Late 19th century: industrialisation and laissez-faire capitalism leaves balance of power in the hands of employers. Federal and state troops employed to put down the Haymarket and Pullman strikes.

Post WWII: when constraints on industry relaxed a wave of strikes unleashed. Federal government again acts against this to weaken power of unions with Taft-Hartley Act in 1947.

New Deal: NRA, NLRB and the Fair Labour Standards Act increase **union** rights (crucially the right for workers to be unionised and to collectively bargain).

Great Society: Civil Rights Act, Economic Opportunity Act and Age Discrimination in Employment Act increase **labour** rights by trying to ensure equality of treatment, pay and opportunity in the workplace.